

CBS EVENING NEWS
7:00 P.M.

CBS-TV
MAY 30

Navy Espionage Case

1985

DAN RATHER: And now there are three. A third Walker family member with ties to the U.S. Navy and access to U.S. military secrets is accused of selling those secrets to the Soviets.

Rita Braver, who broke this story, now reports what's been learned in the spy family case so far and what it is feared the Russians may have learned.

J RITA BRAVER: The government says his code name was the letter K, retired Navy Lieutenant Commander Arthur James Walker, the third member of his family to be charged with spying.

Walker left the Navy in 1973 and in 1980 began working for BSE, a Virginia defense contractor. The government says he admits that same year he began giving classified information to his brother John to deliver to the Russians. Officials say Arthur got \$12,000 for maps and layouts of U.S. ships.

More arrests are still expected, and the Navy is establishing a special review panel to assess damage by the Walker family.

SECY. WEINBERGER: The Walker case represents, I think it's fair to say, a serious loss. And to the extent that any procedural or, really, operational changes are needed, we would institute those.

A BRAVER: Former Deputy CIA Director Bobby Inman today told CBS News a Walker family member may have leaked information in the late 1960s that revealed to the Soviets U.S. ability to track their submarines, and led to improved Soviet anti-detection technology.

P SEN. PATRICK LEAHY: There's sort of a complacency here in the United States. We somehow feel, "Well, the Soviets don't really do that."

BRAVER: But officials say the Soviets really did bribe Arthur Walker, his brother John, the alleged ringleader, and John's son Michael.

In Arthur Walker's Virginia Beach neighborhood today, some were angry.

CAROL JOYCE: I'm really shooocked. I find it very hard to believe that somebody would do that.

BRAVER: And John Walker Senior, the father and grandfather of the accused spies, said he was ashamed.

JOHN WALKER SR: I feel very bad about the whole thing.

BRAVER: Officials familiar with the case say the only motive so far for three members of this Navy family to have spied on their government was greed. They say that it was a family that looked good on the surface, but was willing to sell out its country.

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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Good Morning America

STATION WJLA-TV
ABC Network

DATE May 31, 1985 7:00 A.M.

CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Walker Spy Ring

STEVE BELL: Three members of a single Navy family stand accused of spying for the Soviet Union. The case of John Walker, his case Michael, and his brother Arthur is the latest in a series of highly publicized espionage cases that have raised many questions about our current system of granting security clearances.

P Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia is the ranking Democrat on both the Armed Services Committee and the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Last month he directed four days of hearings into the security clearance system. Senator Nunn is in Washington this morning. And he's joining us from St. Louis, is Admiral Bobby Inman, former Director of Naval Intelligence, also former Deputy Director of the CIA.

First of all, Admiral Inman, we've heard the stories, we've seen the reports that the Navy says this could be a disaster, one of the worst spy cases ever. Just how much damage are we talking about here?

A ADMIRAL BOBBY INMAN: Steve, every spy case hurts. In this case, the major question yet in front of us is, how long did the spying go on?. There's a good reason at this point to worry that most of our ASW tactics, our ability to use our submarines to find Soviet submarines has been compromised over a substantial period of years.

BELL: Now, we're talking about, obviously, a huge ocean, but where our submarines are out there. And as I understand it, we have underwater audio devices that we actually can hear the enemy's submarines, and this sort of thing. Are you talking about this kind of information being compromised?

ADMIRAL INMAN: The ability to locate Soviet submarines with precision was developed during the 1960s by a variety of sources. When they sent their SSBNs out into the Central Atlantic, we'd become very good in the '60s about knowing precisely where they were, how they operated. And for indications and warning against possible hostile attack, that was very valuable.

BELL: All right.

INMAN: There were a variety of ways that that detection was done.

We saw them then come out with a whole new generation of submarines with much longer-range missiles that they pulled back to operate close to coastal waters and where they could use their own surface ships and submarines to provide protective corridors for them all the time. A more survivable system, from their point of view, but also one in which it was much less -- much less knowledge was available to us about their patterns and the kind of threat they might provide.

It's only speculation at this point that knowledge provided through this kind of spy ring prompted that change. But we can't discount that even that kind of long-term strategic change came about from the success.

BELL: But obviously, if they know just how well we can track them and where the gaps are in our capability, we're talking about something very serious.

ADMIRAL INMAN: And they learn how to avoid the ability to detect.

BELL: Senator Nunn, you had a hearing just last month on security clearances. Just exactly what did you find out? How big a problem do we have here?

ADMIRAL INMAN: Well, the problem is getting much worse because the number of people that we have cleared for access to classified information has gone up at an astounding rate in the last five years. Believe it or not, we have 4.2 million people that are cleared for classified information in this country. Fifty percent, some 53 percent of all government employees are cleared for classified information.

Now, this poses a problem that the personnel security people simply can't cope with, no matter how good they are, because the numbers are overwhelming the whole system. We've got to cut back dramatically on the number of people who have access, and that will give us a chance to have better personnel security clearance procedures.

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BELL: Now, one of your witnesses was former spy Christopher Boyce, who called the security clearance system a joke. Is it that bad?

SENATOR NUNN: Well, in his case, if you take what he said in the hearings as being accurate -- and there was no rebuttal of that -- then in the case of the contractor he worked for, it was a very inadequate kind of clearance procedure and very inadequate personnel and physical security access.

So, all of that was very disturbing. I'm afraid that was not an isolated case. I think we've taken too much for granted in this country, and we've got to tighten down. But we've got to cut down the access. And as a matter of fact, we've got to cut down the amount of classified information.

Justice Stewart once said that if everything is classified, nothing is classified. And I think that's what we are facing today.

BELL: Admiral, am I mistaken when I have the impression that motivation for spying is changing in a rather disturbing way?

ADMIRAL INMAN: Back in the '30s and the '40s, most of the spy cases we encountered, those who entered spying did it for ideological reasons. I'm not aware of a single case in the last 15 years where ideology had anything to do with it. Selling secrets for cash. Very little difference between industrial espionage and foreign espionage.

It's a basic question of ethics for the society.

BELL: You're an old Navy man. How do you feel about this? We're talking about career Navy officers accused.

ADMIRAL INMAN: Very distressed, because again it was the constant focus on integrity, ethics that you heard at the outset that was your prime defense against this sort of thing, and consciousness about other people who might be involved in it.

BELL: Senator Nunn, very briefly, what recommendation is most important?

SENATOR NUNN: Well, I would recommend the President of the United States issue an executive order and say to all the agencies and the contractors, "Cut by 50 percent the number of people who have access to classified information, and do it in two years." If we did that we might begin to be able to handle the system.

BELL: Senator Nunn, Admiral Inman, thank you very much for joining us this morning.

IDEAS

Is academic freedom hurt by secret research?

By Robert C. Cowen

There was an air of mystery about the United States' great research universities during World War II. Pistol-packing guards barred corridors and buildings whose restricted access suggested knowledge known only to a privileged few. Even the most daring of student pranksters left those areas alone. The guards meant business, and whatever the university was up to was no business of yours.

It's a scene those universities don't want to see again, however proud their contribution to the war effort. Indeed, they generally prohibit classified research on campus. Yet, for those with long memories, it forms a background

RESEARCH

NOTEBOOK

flow of scientific and technical information.

Thus, when Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle recently asked Stanford University president Donald Kennedy if the university's ban on secret research is not itself an infringement of academic freedom, Kennedy had a ready answer. He explained that Stanford prohibits such work on campus because it would interfere with the life of the university as a community of scholars and inhibit education by restricting free discussion.

Wartime secrecy ruined the free interchange of information and clash of ideas among students and faculty members. It suspended the equal access to knowledge, which is the essence — literally the collegiality — of university life. Perle had no such wholesale limitation in mind. But, as Kennedy noted, once secrecy returns to the campus, however limited its scope, no one knows how it might spread.

It's a live issue. The Department of Defense (DOD), as Perle noted, would

like to place some classified research with universities. This, for example, could extend the scope of work to be done by a nine-university consortium with which the Pentagon is negotiating to develop basic technology for the "star wars" space defense program.

Kennedy and Perle were part of a panel that briefed news reporters on the control of scientific information. The other two panelists were William Perry, former undersecretary of defense for research and engineering, and Adm. Bobby Inman (ret.), former director of the National Security Agency (NSA). The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Association of American Universities, and Scientists' Institute for Public Information held the briefing.

The main topic was concern over the use of export controls to restrict publication of research or its presentation at professional meetings. This has been done with government and industry research in defense-related areas, even when the research itself is nonsecret. There has been little such restriction of university research. But the academic community worries about it.

At the moment, however, there seems little threat of any determined effort to use export controls to restrict university freedom. The Defense Department denies any such intention. It would be prohibited from doing so by the language of the four-year extension of the Export Administration Act. Indeed, there was general agreement among the panelists that academic freedom should be preserved.

But when some faculty members are themselves tempted to take the bait of classified DOD research contracts, there could be problems. Inman, who has been visiting campuses throughout the US, said he has found the desire to take such contracts to be fairly widespread. Pentagon dollars are attractive. And some university scientists and engineers want to have the freedom to help meet what they consider an important national need without being forced to go off campus to do so.

Kennedy rightly pointed out that it is the larger freedom of the university that is at stake. Were such secret projects allowed on campuses, some professors would again have privileged access to university-developed knowledge. They could not discuss it with colleagues. They could

not use it in teaching. Graduate students who worked on their projects would be denied the stimulus of talking over their thesis work with fellow students.

Meanwhile, Werner A. Baum of Florida State University is to receive the AAAS Scientific Freedom and Responsibility Award next week for having faced down the Department of Commerce and the NSA on a secrecy issue seven years ago. Baum, who was then chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, balked at an attempt to slap a secrecy order on an encryption device invented at FSU. The agencies backed off. The order was withdrawn. And Baum helped develop a policy of voluntary review for "sensitive" scholarly papers on cryptology — a policy that preserved academic freedom.

It is unlikely that there will be a need for such standoffs over the next few years. But the tension between academic freedom and national security could tighten as more DOD-funded research is done on campus. What is needed now is a national consensus, especially within the academic community, on the proper role for the university in defense-related work.

A Tuesday column. Robert C. Cowen is the Monitor's natural science editor.

U.S. Aide Opposes Exchange Of Science With Soviet Union

By DAVID BURNHAM

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 3 — A senior Defense Department official said today that "if it was up to me, I would discourage" scientific exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The official, Richard N. Perle, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for international security policy, also said he was disappointed that the National Academy of Sciences was "plunging ahead" in an effort to develop a new exchange agreement with its counterpart in the Soviet Union.

He spoke at a seminar here on the effect of national security controls on scientific inquiry.

Partly because of a 1981 reduction in funds provided for exchanges by the National Science Foundation, there has been a substantial decline in scientific contacts between the two nations in the last few years. The formal agreement between the academies of the two nations expired at the end of 1982.

Agreement for Some Exchanges

Frank Press, president of the National Academy, gave preliminary approval in January to an agreement under which individual exchanges and periodic workshops would be encouraged in areas that are not sensitive and in which both countries excel.

In an interview last week, Mr. Press said there were scientific fields in which American scientists had a lot to learn from Russian scientists.

The seminar today was sponsored by the Scientists' Institute for Public Information, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Association of American Universities.

William J. Perry, Under Secretary of

Defense for research and engineering in the Carter Administration, Bobby R. Inman, the former head of the National Security Agency, and Donald Kennedy, president of Stanford University, also spoke at the seminar.

Concern on Regulating Ideas

They all appeared to agree that the United States should take a number of steps to try to prevent the Soviet Union from obtaining equipment, including large-scale computers, that would significantly advance Soviet manufacturing capability.

But Mr. Perle's remarks contrasted with those of Mr. Kennedy, who said universities had become concerned at what appeared to be a Government move toward trying "to regulate ideas, rather than things."

He emphasized that the basic scientific research undertaken by universities was "very central to the success" of the United States, he warned that "this is a plant that needs careful nurturing."

Mr. Inman, who now is president of the Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corporation, seemed to see more merit in scientific exchanges than Mr. Perle did.

"If you persuaded me that we were learning from it, then the exchanges with the Soviet might be acceptable," Mr. Inman said. He added that he thought scientific exchanges with China, on the other hand, should be actively encouraged. Unlike the Soviet Union, he said China appeared to be moving toward a "consumer economy," adding, "That probably is a risk worth taking."

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